

The Influence of Social Media and News Media Diet on Attitudes of Asian Americans toward Policing and Immigration

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Previous research has found that media diet and social media use have a significant impact on attitudes toward racialized issues such as policing and immigration. While these studies primarily focused on White and Black Americans, media and social media effects on attitudes of Asian Americans remain under-explored. We fill this gap by quantifying the relationship between news media diet and political interactions on social media with attitudes of Asian Americans toward these two racialized policies. We use data from the Cooperative Election Study (CES) 2020 to test four hypotheses that capture the difference in media effects by gender and immigrant background. Using reception theory as our theoretical framework, we found that Asian American women and immigrants were more susceptible to media effects from specific news outlets. We also identified that Fox News and MSNBC both had significant effect on attitudes toward both these policies, even though it varied by national origin. Finally, our findings suggest that social media effects are significantly less pronounced than mainstream media, and that isolating such effects needs more detailed questioning of the choice of social media platforms and duration of use among respondents. Our study contributes to the growing body of research on Asian Americans' attitudes toward racialized issues. Given that Asian Americans are the fastest growing immigrant population in the US and are playing a key role in shaping legal and legislative outcomes on racialized policies at both the local and national levels, this study can aid in understanding the nuances of attitude formation in this diverse group.

Additional Key Words and Phrases: Social Media, News Media, Policing, Immigration, Asian Americans

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Information plays a vital role in shaping people's attitudes and behaviors, particularly in the context of law enforcement, where many individuals lack direct interactions with the police. Social media, a rapidly growing means of communication, facilitates quick and convenient information sharing. The empowering nature of social media has enabled everyone to generate and distribute their own content, while also granting them greater ability to selectively choose the content they want to engage with. This engagement allows for activities like commenting, sharing, or liking posts without being constrained by geographical location, time, or language barriers. Such interactions expand the audience's awareness of incidents and offer diverse viewpoints, whether positive or negative [19, 43].

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A considerable body of research indicates that individuals heavily depend on the media for information regarding crime and immigration, and that their perceptions on these subjects are shaped by their media consumption [8, 15, 18, 19, 36, 40, 43, 44]. Past work has shown that media effects vary by personal experiences and demographic characteristics like race. Yet most studies of media effects on race-related matters address race as a White/Black binary or a White/Non-White binary. Few studies that have considered Hispanic or Asian Americans' attitudes have used localized samples [19, 43] and do not explore the intra-group variations among Asian Americans.

Asian Americans represent an immense range of diversity in cultural heritages, nationalities, languages, religions and historical backgrounds. From Chinese, Indian, and Korean Americans to Vietnamese, Japanese, and Filipino Americans, the Asian American population embodies a diverse array of identities rooted in their respective national origins. Unfortunately, this diversity often gets oversimplified in mainstream discussions, reinforcing stereotypes and misunderstandings. Exploring the racial attitudes present within this group allows us to better understand the mechanisms that shape their attitudes on key policy issues.

In this paper, we analyze the connections between the news media consumption habits of the six largest Asian American ethnic groups and their stances on two significant racialized policy issues related to law enforcement - the expansion of police forces and the increase in border patrols along the US-Mexico border. By utilizing data from the Cooperative Election Study 2020, we employed logistic regression models to confirm four hypotheses that link media influence to attitudes towards these matters among Chinese, Indian, Filipino, Korean, Vietnamese, and Japanese Americans. Our study is grounded in the theoretical framework of the Differential Reception Theory.

Our findings indicate significant variance in media effects among Asian American by national origins, with the two news channels of interest – MSNBC and Fox News – showing significant association with attitudes toward racialized issues. Consumption of Fox News network was positively correlated with pro-police attitudes and support for more border patrols, whereas MSNBC viewership was generally associated with opposition to increase in both. Furthermore, foreign-born Asian Americans were more susceptible to Fox News' effects on their policing-attitudes, while MSNBC had a stronger impact on Asian American women. In general, social media effects on attitudes were weaker than those of the two traditional news networks.

Our study contributes critical insights into the mechanisms of Asian American racial attitude formation. It also highlights the diversity between different national origin groups and the need for more refined survey questionnaires that consider a battery of factors specific to Asian Americans' racial attitudes. The rest of this paper is structured as follows. Section 1 provides a brief overview of recent events that centered Asian Americans in debates surrounding racialized policies in the US, and the need to study their attitudes in greater details. Section 2 enumerates past research on media effects and its limitations, whereas section 3 outlines the cultivation and reception theories, and our hypotheses derived from extant research. Section 4 discusses the data – including survey questions – and section 5 lists the methods we used to analyse it. Section 6 lists the results of our study, section 7 discussed our findings and section 8 concludes our study.

1 BACKGROUND

Asian Americans constitute the rapidly expanding group of eligible voters [4] and have been increasingly influencing the outcomes of local elections and referendums [21, 27]. While traditionally known as a reliable Democratic voting bloc, a vocal minority of Asian voters have shifted towards conservative ideologies in recent years [27, 46]. They also hold differing views from the progressive politics on issues such as law enforcement [28], policing [28, 42], and immigration [41]. Scholars have identified [] significant and enduring racial disparities in attitudes towards policies directly or indirectly related to racial identity – policies and issues that are racialized. Public sentiment on

these matters is predominantly influenced by race, as well as by ideological inclinations, partisan affiliations, and group awareness.

In this project, our focus is on two primary racialized concerns - policing and immigration. Policing in the United States is a racialized matter due to its unequal effects on Black individuals, as shown by the higher chances of Black and Latino individuals being singled out for traffic stops, drug-related searches [34], and deaths involving law enforcement [11]. The Black Lives Matter movement has recently gained prominence in discussions about police misconduct and the need for change. Asian Americans are increasingly playing a role not only in shaping these discussions but also in influencing policies on this issue. For instance, initiatives to reform bail regulations in New York and to reform criminal justice procedures in San Francisco faced opposition from certain Asian American groups in addition to White conservatives. Indeed, the perspectives of Asian Americans on policing and the Black Lives Matter movement differ from those of White and Black Americans and are associated with various factors, including social media usage and news consumption [28].

Similarly, immigration continues to be a highly debated topic with significant racial implications [25, 26]. Asian Americans play a crucial role in influencing the connection between immigration and the racial makeup of America [25]. Moreover, as majority of them are immigrants [4], they bear the most significant impact of immigration policies. Attitudes towards immigration reform vary greatly among Asian Americans, with a majority supporting initiatives to provide legal status to undocumented migrants, while there are vocal minority groups opposing migrant accommodations at local levels [24].

In this project, we analyze the relationship between news media diet and social media use on attitudes toward racialized issues. Past research has found that framing in news media, choice of news network, preference of social media platforms, types of content followed on social media, and duration of social media use shapes attitudes on a multitude of racialized policies [1, 14, 18–20, 33, 43, 45].

2 PRIOR WORK

Previous studies have extensively examined how the media influences attitudes towards policing and immigration [5, 8, 19, 43]. Sources of political news, their content composition, and the degree of social media use are known to shape attitudes on policing. For instance, viewing local and national television news has a notable positive impact on endorsing policing practices like the use of force and stop-and-question procedures [5, 12]. Some studies suggest a more pronounced influence of national news broadcasts compared to local ones [9], while others have not identified a significant correlation with watching local or national news[20]. Overall, following mainstream news is linked to holding more supportive views of the police. Additionally, individuals who consume news online are more inclined to have unfavorable opinions of the police, with effects varying depending on race and gender. For white participants, online news consumption is associated with a decrease in pro-police sentiments, whereas among female participants, spending more time watching national news is related to less favorable perceptions of the police. This indicates that the method of news consumption plays a crucial role in shaping perspectives on a particular policy matter.

Research examining the impact of social media usage has demonstrated a notable association between time spent on social media and individuals' attitudes towards law enforcement [43]. Individuals who devoted more time to social media tended to have less favorable opinions of the police, with distinct variations observed based on gender (men showing more positive views), age (older individuals exhibiting more positive views), and ideology (conservatives expressing more positive views). Notably, the study did not identify any significant link between attitudes towards policing and the specific social media platforms used. In contrast, previous research has

indicated that the influence of social media can differ based on race and gender [20]. Specifically, the findings revealed a positive correlation between increased social media usage and favorable attitudes towards policing among White participants, while female participants showed a negative correlation. These results suggest that the impact of media on racial attitudes can vary significantly in terms of intensity and direction based on race and gender.

Whereas these works focused on media effects attitudes of White and Black Americans, studies of Asian Americans' social media use and racial attitudes are comparatively rare. Past research has shown that Asian Americans' attitudes are moderated by the choice of news media, linguistic preferences in news consumption, and preference of social media platforms [28, 35] in localized cases. However, substantial variance in racial attitudes remains unexplained by these factors. For instance, despite controlling for racial and ethnic identities, linked fate, political ideology, education, income, gender and immigrant generation, Merseth et al.[31] only achieved an R-squared value of 0.211.

2.1 Limitations of Past Research

Scholars have identified three main limitations. First, we need to study the social media interactions of users, including whether they create or share other posts related to a subject. This would also include liking and commenting on posts related to the topic or sharing images, videos, and other media related to the topic. Second, surveys like those by [20] and [43] were based on localized samples. Given the high levels of geographical diversity among Asian American populations in the US, it is pertinent to analyze nationally representative data to accurately quantify media effects. Lastly, prior research has scarcely considered Asian American responses to questions on media effects. Some considered race as a binary of white and non-white [19], others included very few samples of Asian Americans, resulting in low statistical power for any findings associated with the group. Furthermore, such small and local sample sizes do not allow us to evaluate the variation in media effects by groups of national origin such as Chinese, Indian or Vietnamese Americans.

In this study, we remedy these issues by using a nationally representative survey, namely the Cooperative Election Study.

3 THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

Research on the impact of media on public opinion is grounded in two main theoretical frameworks: cultivation theory and reception theory. Cultivation theory, developed by Gerbner [13], suggests that individuals who engage with news media and television content for extended periods are more likely to perceive the reality portrayed in mass media as accurate. Essentially, their viewpoints on issues covered in mass media align with the narratives presented on TV. This alignment between the portrayal of issues in mass media and the attitudes of their viewers is referred to as the media effect. Although Gerbner did not take into account individual characteristics, subsequent studies have demonstrated how media effects can differ based on such characteristics. For instance, the impact of media on attitudes towards crime and law enforcement policies was found to be more pronounced among White Americans compared to Black Americans, more significant among women than men, and more noticeable among urban residents than rural dwellers.

The Differential Reception Theory explains the variance in public opinion arising from individual characteristics like identity features, previous experiences, and how an issue is presented to the audience. It is based on five key hypotheses: affinity, vulnerability, resonance, substitution, and selective exposure [19, 43]. This research aims to investigate the validity of these hypotheses for various racial groups, with a specific focus on different national origin groups within the Asian American community.

The affinity hypothesis suggests that media effects on individuals are amplified when they share characteristics with the characters in the media story. This may relate to situations such as being a crime victim (in the context of policing or crime perceptions), someone who attributes program rejection to affirmative action policies (pertinent to affirmative action issues), or an undocumented immigrant facing deportation or legal troubles due to their status (relevant to immigration policy discussions) [6, 17, 19, 43]. Likewise, the vulnerability hypothesis asserts that groups portrayed as crime targets in the news or TV are more likely to be affected by such content than others [38]. For instance, studies have shown that media depictions of female crime victims strongly influenced women's attitudes, with a lesser effect on men. Resonance describes the intensified media influence when personal experiences align with media portrayals. For example, those who see media reports reflecting their personal experiences tend to experience a stronger cultivation effect [13, 19, 29, 43]. Conversely, the substitution hypothesis suggests that for non-victims or unaffected individuals, media portrayals replace actual experiences [16, 19, 43]. Finally, the selective exposure framework posits that people prefer content that matches their political views, thereby reinforcing their pre-existing opinions [18, 30, 43]. This tendency can influence the media's effect on racial attitudes.

These hypotheses result in diverse and sometimes conflicting predictions regarding the impact of media on a particular policy matter. For instance, resonance theory proposes that media influence will be stronger for individuals with previous familiarity with the issue or policy under consideration. Conversely, substitution theory argues that media effects are more significant for those lacking such familiarity. An essential inquiry addressed in this research is which of these five hypotheses hold true for Asian Americans.

3.1 Hypotheses

Based on prior research on Asian Americans' attitudes on race and variability in media effects, we arrive at the following hypotheses. We also include two exploratory research questions.

HYPOTHESIS 1 (H1). Among Asian Americans respondents, media effects on attitudes toward policing are stronger among women than men.

HYPOTHESIS 2 (H2). Among Asian Americans respondents, media effects on attitudes toward policing are stronger among foreign-born individuals than US-born individuals.

HYPOTHESIS 3 (H3). Among Asian Americans respondents, media effects on attitudes toward border patrols are stronger among women than men.

HYPOTHESIS 4 (H4). Among Asian Americans respondents, media effects on attitudes toward border patrols are stronger among foreign-born individuals than US-born individuals.

4 DATA

We used data from the 2020 Cooperative Election Study (CES 2020). The CES is conducted by YouGov on its panel of US-based respondents. The 2020 survey had two waves and a nationally representative sample of 61,000, including 44,128 White Americans, 6,952 Black Americans, 5,180 Hispanic Americans, and 1,831 Asian Americans. We rely on the data collected in the post-election wave.

4.1 Dependent Variables

The dependent variables in our study include attitudes toward two key racialized policies - policing and immigration. From the CES survey, we draw questions that ask whether the number of police officers should be increased, and whether border patrols on the US-Mexico border should be

increased. These are coded as binary variables – yes or no – and were recoded to a 0/1 binary (0 for no, and 1 for yes) to fit logistic regression models.

4.2 Independent Variables

We selected two sets of independent variables on media usage - news channel preference, and questions on social media use. For news channel preference, the question asked whether a respondent watched Fox News, MSNBC, CBS, PBS, ABC, CNN, or NBC news. We recoded this variable as a five-level variable that combined the Fox News and MSNBC categories as follows – did not watch TV news, watched only Fox News, watched only MSNBC, watched both, watched some other TV news.

In examining social media usage, we incorporated five questions from the CES survey. These questions focused on participants' interactions with political material on social media. The survey items inquired whether the participants (1) posted a story, photo, video or link about politics, (2) Posted a comment about politics, (3) Read a story or watched a video about politics, (4) Followed a political event, (5) Forwarded a story, photo, video or link about politics to friends, and (6) None of the above. We classified users who had followed political events or read a story or watched a video about politics as passive participants, and users who posted comment, a story, photo, video, or link about politics or forwarded the same to friends as active participants. We then combined these six categories into one five level variable as follows – no social media usage, passive participation, active participation, both, and neither.

4.3 Control Variables

Several factors shape Americans' attitudes toward racialized policies. Prior research identifies partisan identity, political ideology, socio-economic class (measured by income and educational status), gender, urbanicity, and age as key determinants of public opinion on these issues. Researchers also highlight immigration status, past experiences with discrimination, and the strength of one's racial identity as critical in shaping the attitudes of immigrant-heavy minority groups like Asian Americans.

For our modeling of the CES survey data, we used the following nine control variables. Partisan identity was modeled as a categorical variable of five levels: Democrat, Republican, Independent, Other, and None. Likewise, political ideology was reformatted to a four-level variable – Liberal, Moderate, Conservative, and 'Not sure. Urbanicity was modeled as a five-level variable – city, suburb, town, rural, or other. Educational status was reformatted from a six-level variable to a two-level variable: not college educated, and college educated. Immigration status was coded as a binary variable – foreign born or US born – whereas gender was coded as a binary variable – male or female. We also included a variable for citizenship – citizen or not citizen, and another one for sexuality – heterosexual, lesbian, gay, bisexual, other, or prefer not to say. Finally, we controlled for location using a four-level variable called census region – Northeast, Midwest, South, West.

5 METHODS

We used logistic regression models to test our hypotheses. Each model consists of one dependent variable and several independent variables. To test hypotheses H1 and H2, we ran the following logistic regression model:

Variable Type	Variable	Survey Question	Response Options	Most Common Value
Dependent	increase border patrols	What do you think the U.S. government should do about immigration? Increase the number of border patrols on the US-Mexican border	1 (Support), 0 (Oppose)	1 (Support)
	increase police officers	Do you support or oppose each of the following proposals? Increase the number of police on the street by 10 percent, even if it means fewer funds for other public services.	1 (Support), 0 (Oppose)	0 (Oppose)
Independent	social_media	In the past 24 hours have you used social media platforms (such as Facebook or Youtube)?	1 (No), 1 (Yes)	1 (Yes)
	gender	Are you ..?	1 (Male), 2 (Female)	2 (Female)
	immigration status	Which of these statements best describes you?	2 (US-born), 1 (Foreign-born)	2 (US-born)
	national_origin	From which country or region do you trace your heritage or ancestry?	China, India, Japan, Korean, Vietnamese, Philippines	China
	ideology	On a scale from 1 to 7, where 1 is very liberal and 7 is very conservative, how would you describe your political views?	1 (Very liberal) to 7 (Very conservative)	4
	partisanship	Generally speaking, do you think of yourself as a Democrat, Republican, Independent, or something else?	Democrat, Republican, Independent, Other	Democrat
	sexuality	How would you describe your sexual orientation?	Heterosexual, Gay/Lesbian, Bisexual, Other	Heterosexual
Control	education	What is the highest level of education you have completed?	Less than HS to Postgraduate degree	Bachelor's
	income	What is your total annual household income before taxes?	Categorical income brackets (e.g., \$0–\$20k to \$150k+)	\$50k–\$75k
	census_region	In which region of the U.S. do you currently reside?	Northeast, Midwest, South, West	South
	social_media × gender	Interaction term: social media use × gender	Derived variable	–
	social_media × immigration_status	Interaction term: social media use × immigration status	Derived variable	–
	social_media × national_origin	Interaction term: social media use × national origin	Derived variable	–

Table 1. Survey variables used in the study, corresponding survey questions, response categories, and sample medians. Interaction terms are derived from their respective constituent variables.

$$\begin{aligned}
& police_spending \sim census_region \\
& \quad ideology + partisanship + sexuality \\
& \quad gender + income + education + ideology + immigration_status \quad (1) \\
& \quad media \times gender + media \times immigration_status \\
& \quad media \times national_origin
\end{aligned}$$

For hypotheses H3 and H4, we used the following logistic regression model:

$$\begin{aligned}
& \textit{border_spending} \sim \textit{census_region} \\
& \quad \textit{ideology} + \textit{partisanship} + \textit{sexuality} \\
& \quad \textit{gender} + \textit{income} + \textit{education} + \textit{ideology} + \textit{immigration_status} \quad (2) \\
& \quad \textit{media} \times \textit{gender} + \textit{media} \times \textit{immigration_status} \\
& \quad \textit{media} \times \textit{national_origin}
\end{aligned}$$

To answer our research questions RQ1 and RQ2, we used two sets of regression equations: one for the four largest racial groups—White, Hispanic, Black, and Asian—and another for the sub-sample of Asian Americans. For each set, we then calculated one regression for each policy issue – policing and border patrols – for each social media variable – whether they used social media and the type of social media activity they were involved in.

$$\begin{aligned}
& \textit{increase_police_officers} \sim \textit{census_region} \\
& \quad \textit{ideology} + \textit{partisanship} + \textit{sexuality} \\
& \quad \textit{gender} + \textit{income} + \textit{education} + \textit{ideology} + \textit{immigration_status} \quad (3) \\
& \quad \textit{social_media} \times \textit{gender} + \textit{social_media} \times \textit{immigration_status} \\
& \quad \textit{social_media} \times \textit{national_origin}
\end{aligned}$$

$$\begin{aligned}
& \textit{increase_border_patrols} \sim \textit{census_region} \\
& \quad \textit{ideology} + \textit{partisanship} + \textit{sexuality} \\
& \quad \textit{gender} + \textit{income} + \textit{education} + \textit{ideology} + \textit{immigration_status} \quad (4) \\
& \quad \textit{social_media} \times \textit{gender} + \textit{social_media} \times \textit{immigration_status} \\
& \quad \textit{social_media} \times \textit{national_origin}
\end{aligned}$$

We fit these models on an Asian American sub-sample consisting of the six largest national origin groups – Chinese, Indian, Filipino, Korean, Vietnamese, and Japanese Americans in Stata SE18.0[39].

To evaluate the effects of media and social media variables within each subgroup by race or national origin, we used differences in marginal predictions (i.e. contrasts) of the dependent variables. For example, to test hypothesis 1, we measured the pairwise differences between different levels of the media variable for each level of the gender variable – male and female. For H3, we measured the same contrast for each level of the immigration_status variable – US-born or foreign-born. We repeated this process for all other hypotheses and research questions.

For RQ1, we estimated the difference in marginal predictions of attitudes toward policing (or border policy) using pairwise contrasts for each level of the national origin variable – China, India, Korea, Japan, Vietnam, and Philippines. Likewise, for RQ2, we assessed the difference in marginal predictions of the dependent variables across different levels of the two social media variables.

6 RESULTS

Figures 1a, 1b, 2a, 2b, 3a, and 3b show the results of models 1 and 2. The relationship between watching Fox News or MSNBC and attitudes toward racial policing and border patrols varies by national origin. Among Chinese Americans, respondents who watched Fox News but not MSNBC were significantly more likely to favor an increase in police officers. The probability of support was higher by 26.4 percentage points. The relationship between Fox News viewership and national origin

was not significant for Indian, Japanese, Korean, and Filipino Americans¹. Watching MSNBC was associated with significantly less support for more police officers – 20.1, 33.5, and 21.8 percentage points – among Chinese, Korean and Filipino Americans respectively.

Among Asian Americans, a significant association was observed between attitudes toward policing and the interaction of gender and media diet. For female respondents, Fox News viewership was associated with a 16.3 percentage point higher probability of supporting more police officers, while MSNBC viewership was associated with an 18.9 percentage point lower probability. For male respondents, Fox News viewership was associated with a 25.5 percentage point higher probability of supporting more police officers compared to those who did not watch TV news. The relationship between MSNBC viewership and support for more police officers was not statistically significant for male respondents. Additionally, a significant association was found between police-related attitudes and the interaction of immigration status and news media diet. Among foreign-born Asian Americans, Fox News viewership was associated with a 24.1 percentage point higher probability of supporting more police officers, while for US-born Asian Americans, the association was 16.3 percentage points. MSNBC viewership was associated with a 17 percentage point lower probability of supporting more police officers for US-born respondents, but the association was not statistically significant for immigrant Asian Americans.

Given that Fox News had a stronger association with policing-related attitudes among men than women, H1 is not validated for Fox News. For MSNBC, we see a significant relationship with policing-related attitudes among women but not men. Therefore, H1 is validated for MSNBC. Second, we see that Fox News had a stronger relationship with police-related attitudes among immigrant (foreign-born) Asian American respondents, and therefore, H2 is validated for Fox News. But for MSNBC, we observe a stronger relationship among US-born respondents, and consequently, H2 cannot be validated for MSNBC.

Taking into account border patrols, we see a slightly different trend. Fox News viewership was heavily correlated with support for more border patrols among Chinese (29.5 % points), Indian (31.6), Japanese (34.3), Korean (36.9) and Filipino Americans (28.5). On the other hand, watching MSNBC had no significant relationship with attitudes toward policing among any of these five national origin groups. Among Vietnamese Americans, neither news channel was associated with attitudes towards policing.

Considering the splits by gender, we observe a significant relationship between Fox News and support for more border patrols among female respondents; Fox News viewers are 27.3% more likely to support an increase in border patrols. The relationship between Fox News and support for more border patrols was not significant among male respondents. Furthermore, watching MSNBC was not associated with attitudes toward border security among either gender-based group of Asian Americans. When we consider the relationship by immigrant status, Fox News had a significant relationship with support for more border patrols. Among foreign-born Asian Americans, this was associated with a difference of 20.5 percentage points in probability of supporting more border security, whereas among US-born respondents it was 20.7 percentage points. On the other hand, MSNBC viewership had no significant relationship with attitudes toward border patrols.

If we now evaluate hypotheses H3 and H4, we see that Fox News had a significant relationship with border-related attitudes of Asian American women but not men, whereas MSNBC had no significant relationship with either. As a result, H3 is validated for Fox News, but not MSNBC. We

¹For Vietnamese Americans, we could not measure the marginal probabilities for policing due to small sample size of respondents for this question.

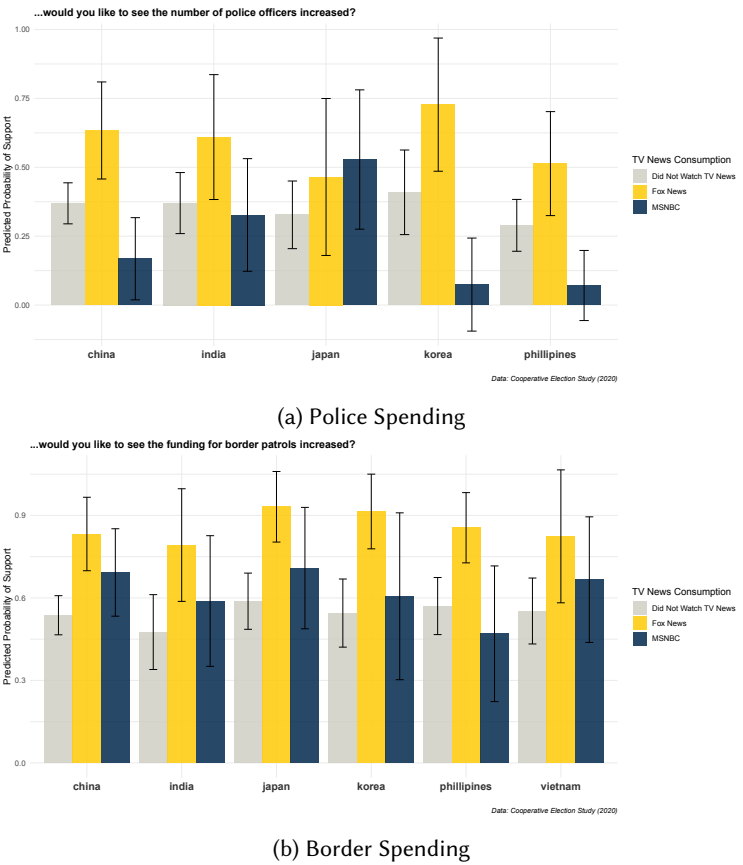


Fig. 1. Probability of support for increasing police spending and increasing border patrols by media diets among the six largest Asian American national origin groups.

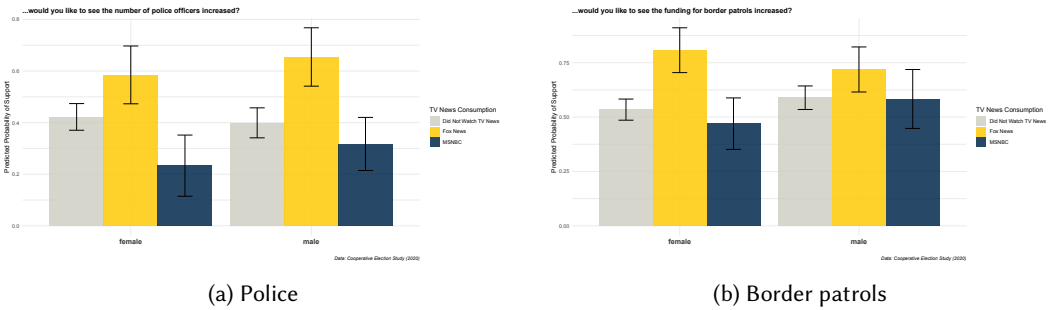


Fig. 2. Probability of support for increasing police officers and increasing border patrols by media diets across gender groups

also see that Fox News had a significant association with border-related opinions among both US-born and foreign-born Asian Americans, whereas MSNBC did not show a significant relationship to attitudes among either. Consequently, we cannot validate H4 for either Fox News or MSNBC.

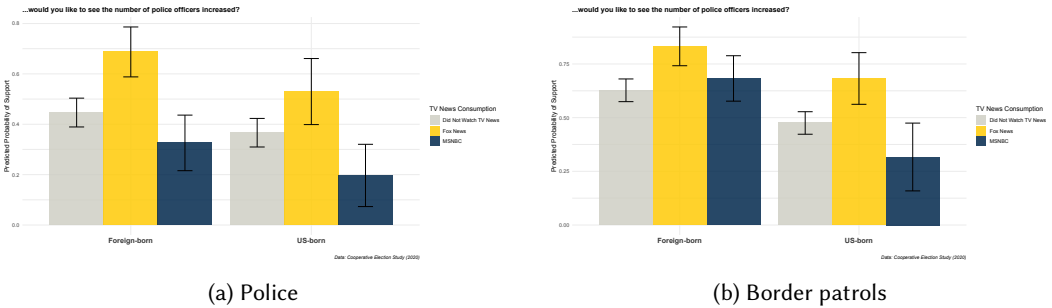


Fig. 3. Probability of support for increasing police officers and increasing border patrols by media diets split by immigration status

Group	Fox News		MSNBC		Social Media	
	Policing	Border Patrols	Policing	Border Patrols	Policing	Border Patrols
Gender						
Female	0.163*	0.273**	-0.189**	-0.065	-0.108**	0.009
Male	0.255**	0.130	-0.082	-0.006	-0.027	-0.021
Nativity						
Foreign-born	0.241**	0.205**	-0.121	0.055	-0.087	-0.037
US-born	0.163*	0.207**	-0.170*	-0.158	-0.053	0.034
Party ID						
Democrat	—	—	—	—	-0.113	-0.086
Independent	—	—	—	—	-0.083	-0.090
Republican	—	—	—	—	-0.061	0.160
Ethnicity/National Origin						
China	0.264*	0.295**	-0.201*	0.156	-0.085	-0.106*
India	0.240	0.316*	-0.043	0.113	-0.032	0.010
Japan	0.137	0.343**	0.201	0.120	-0.145	-0.171*
Korea	0.318	0.369**	-0.335**	0.061	-0.041	-0.078
Philippines	0.224	0.285**	-0.218*	-0.101	0.049	-0.091
Vietnam	—	0.271	—	0.114	-0.062	-0.064

Table 2. Change in probability of supporting increased police presence or border patrols, disaggregated by media source and respondent characteristics. Baseline category is respondents who did not use that media source. A positive coefficient indicates greater support for policy. Stars denote significance (* $p < .05$, ** $p < .01$).

Next, we consider the relationship between social media use and responses to questions on policing and border security. Figures 4a, 4b, 5a, 5b, 6a, 6b, 7a, and 7b plot the probability of support for the two policy proposals by national origin, gender, immigrant background, and partisan identity respectively. Tables ??, ??, ??, and ?? show the difference in probability of support for said policies between people who used social media and those who did not.

As we can see, social media use was not strongly linked to attitudes on policing or border security. We found no significant relationship between social media use and policing for any of the six national origin groups. When split by gender, Asian American women who used social media were significantly less likely to support an increase in police officers by 10.8 percentage points. However, for Asian American men, there was no statistically significant association between use of social media and attitudes on policing. Considering immigrant background, neither foreign-born nor US-born Asian Americans indicated a significant relationship between social media use and support for more police officers. Finally, splitting the sample by party, we found so significant

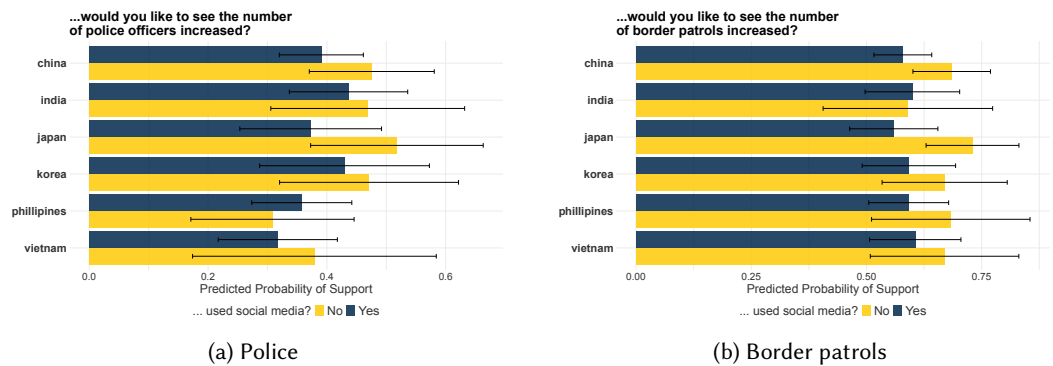


Fig. 4. Probability of support for increasing police officers and increasing border patrols by media diets split by country of origin. Higher values indicate greater support.

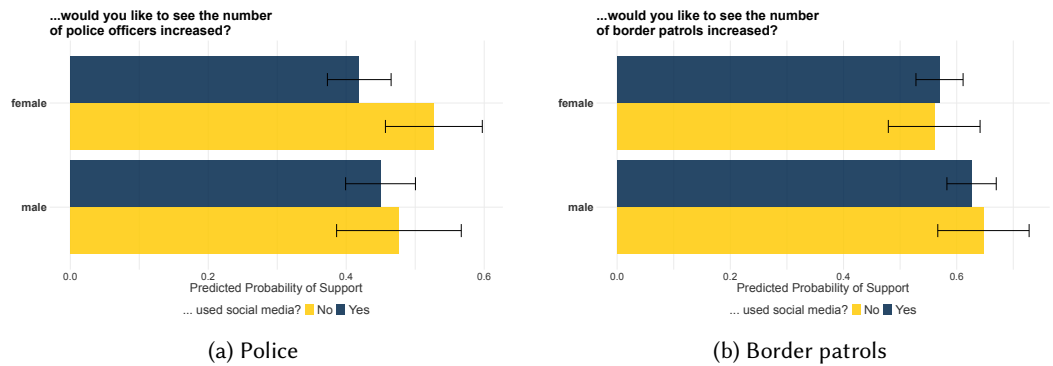


Fig. 5. Probability of support for increasing police officers and increasing border patrols by media diets split by gender. Higher values indicate greater support.

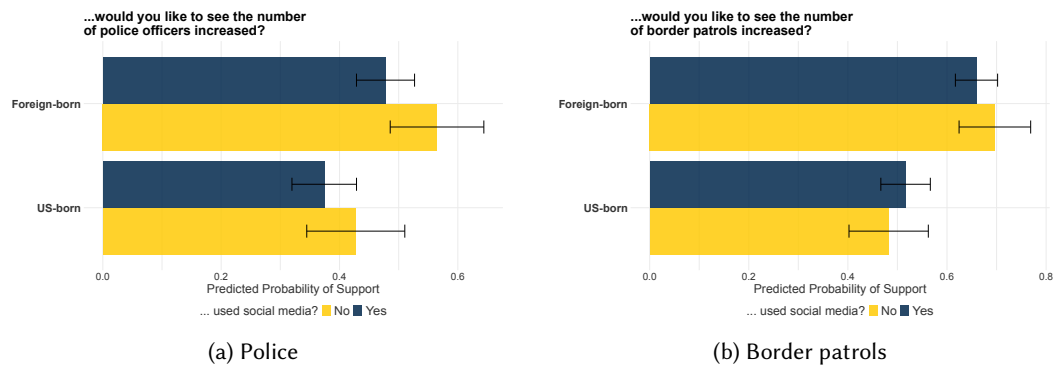


Fig. 6. Probability of support for increasing police officers and increasing border patrols by media diets split by immigration background. Higher values indicate greater support.

association between social media use among Democrats, Republicans, or Independents and their attitudes toward increasing police officer numbers.

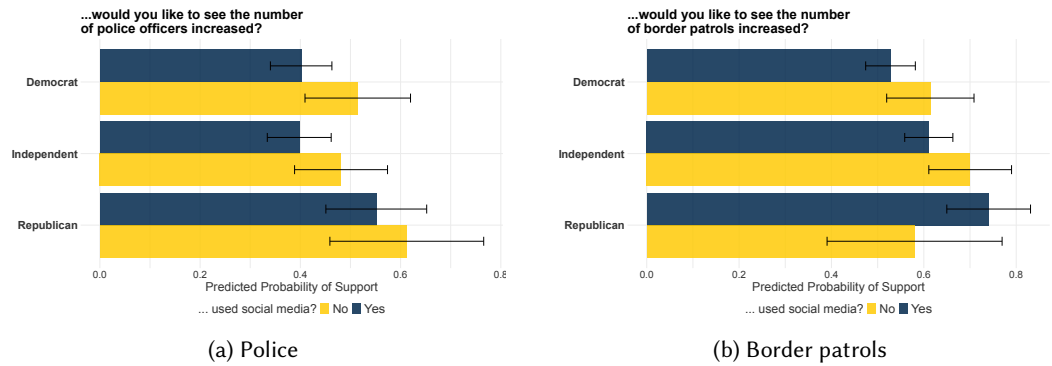


Fig. 7. Probability of support for increasing police officers and increasing border patrols by media diets split by partisan identity. Higher values indicate greater support.

Social media use was strongly associated with support for more police officers only among Asian American women, and not among men. Therefore, H1 is validated. However, we see no relationship between social media use and policing-related attitudes among foreign-born and US-born respondents. As a result, we cannot validate H2 for social media use.

Considering the relationship with border policy, Chinese and Japanese Americans who used social media were less likely to favor an increase in the number of police officers by 10.6 and 17.1 percentage points respectively. We did not detect a significant association for Indian, Korean, Filipino, or Vietnamese Americans. Splitting the entire sample of Asian Americans by gender, we found no significant relationship between social media use and attitudes on border patrols. Likewise, neither foreign-born nor US-born Asian American respondents showed any significant relationships between their social media use and their support for increasing border patrols. Finally, none of the three partisan identity groups – Democrats, Republicans, and Independents – showed a significant relationship between social media use and opinion on border security.

As shown in table ??, social media use had no significant relationship with support for more border patrols among men or women. As we cannot confirm a greater impact on women than men, we cannot validate H3. Similarly, social media use was not correlated with attitudes on the same issue among foreign-born and US-born Asian American respondents. Therefore, we fail to validate H4 as well.

7 DISCUSSION

In this paper, we explored the relationship between media news preferences and social media use, and attitudes toward two racialized issues—policing and immigration—across six Asian national origin groups in the US: Chinese, Indian, Filipino, Vietnamese, Korean, and Japanese Americans. We also examined media effects among men and women, among immigrant and native-born respondents, and by partisan identities. Our findings both validate and challenge the conventional understanding of media effects among minority groups in the US.

First, we observe that Fox News and MSNBC viewers differ in their attitudes on policing among Chinese Americans, and to a lesser degree among Korean and Filipino Americans. There are several explanations for this pattern. Past research has shown differing effect of Fox News and non-Fox News on a broad range of socio-economic issues [22]. Furthermore, in the aftermath of George Floyd’s murder in May 2020, coverage of the subsequent racial justice protests leaned critical to outright negative right-leaning news networks like Fox News[3] but was much more nuanced on

MSNBC [10]. In addition, Fox News is associated with activation of anti-Black attitudes through priming effects, which further accentuate pro-police opinions [2]. On the other hand, MSNBC framed its coverage of the protests in the context of wider protest movements and systemic issues [10]. This discrepancy in framing of the issue may be related to attitudes toward policing of Fox News and MSNBC viewers.

On border security, Fox News viewership was more predictive of attitudes than MSNBC viewership among five of the six national origin groups. Previous studies similarly found Fox News viewership was associated with support for more restrictive border policies among both self-identified conservatives and liberals [7]. Our results indicate that these effects stand even when we control for partisan identity. The significant coverage of [23] in immigration-related news and dominance of crime and border security-related frames on Fox News after 2016 may be key factors in amplifying its impact.

Second, Fox News shows weaker relationships with attitudes toward policing than border patrols. One possible explanation is that self-selection – the tendency of respondents to consume content from TV news channels that align with their partisan or ideological beliefs – may have subdued the effect of the channel on policing, on which partisan divides tend to be stronger. Moreover, the positive relationship with support for increased border patrol meets prior expectations [7, 32]. Nonetheless, the different relationships between Fox News and policing and border security demand further analysis that combine public opinion surveys with content analysis of news media coverage of these issues.

Third, the splits by gender reveal interesting patterns. Both news channels have a significant relationship to women's attitudes on policing, whereas only Fox News showed significant correlation with men's attitudes. On border security, Fox News was positively associated with support for more border patrols among women, but not men. The vulnerability hypothesis of DRT can explain this difference by gender. Women are expected to be more responsive to news about crime – a common feature in stories about police and illegal immigration at the Southern border.

Fourth, on policing, we find that immigrant Asian Americans were more impressionable by Fox News than their native born counterparts. The effect on attitudes toward border policy was nearly identical between the two groups. However, MSNBC had a stronger association with US-born Asian Americans' responses to policing than those of immigrants, and had no association at all with the border-related issue.

7.1 Social Media Effects

Social media use was not strongly related to attitudes on policing or border policy. Past work has indicated that, given the users' ability to curate their own content, social media effects are expected to be weaker than news media [19]. Furthermore, there is evidence on the inapplicability of cultivation theory and its derivatives in the context of social media [37]. We assert that self-selection reduces social media's role in influencing attitudes among respondents, including Asian Americans. We observed that none of the three partisan identity groups – Democrats, Independents, and Republicans – exhibit significant relationships between social media use and attitudes on racialized policies. Nonetheless, we do see social media use had a significant role in shaping attitudes of Chinese respondents on border policy, which matched expectations from prior work [28]. Women's attitudes on policing, too, were more associated with their social media consumption, whereas social media use had no relationship with men's attitudes toward either policy. This suggests that the vulnerability hypothesis of DRT may hold true for social media platforms.

8 CONCLUSION

We utilized logistic regression to examine the relationship between media consumption habits – including both mainstream news media and social media use – and attitudes towards two significant racialized topics concerning law enforcement – policing and immigration. Our variables of interest were participants' responses to questions regarding the expansion of police forces and border patrol agents. By using data on news channel preferences and political interactions on social media from the CES 2020 survey, we analyzed these associations among six Asian American subgroups – Chinese, Indian, Filipino, Korean, Vietnamese, and Japanese Americans. Furthermore, we investigated the difference in these media effects by gender, immigrant background, and partisan identity.

We see that Fox News had a significant association with attitudes of Chinese Americans toward policing, whereas MSNBC viewership showed a significant relationship with the same for Chinese, Korean, and Filipino Americans. Regarding support for more border patrol agents, Fox News showed a statistically significant positive association for Chinese, Indian, Japanese, Korean, and Filipino Americans.

Validation of our hypotheses yielded the following results. H1 and H2 consider media effects on attitudes toward policing. H1 posited that media effects are expected to be stronger among women than men. It was validated for MSNBC and social media use, but not for Fox News. H2 claimed that media effects will be stronger among foreign-born Asian Americans than native born Asian Americans. We validated H2 for Fox News, but failed to validate it for MSNBC and social media.

H3 and H4 consider attitudes toward border policy. H3 asserts that media effects are stronger among women than men. It was validated for Fox News, but not MSNBC and social media. Finally, H4 claims that media effects on border patrols are stronger among foreign-born Asian Americans. H4 was not validated for any of three media we considered.

Our findings indicate that the consumption of traditional TV media has a more significant relationship with attitudes toward police and immigration than social media use. This outcome aligns with earlier research findings by scholars [19, 43] that highlighted the scarcity of connections between social media usage or engagement and attitudes towards policies. Furthermore, we posit that while border security-related attitudes of Asian Americans were, on average, more susceptible to media effects than their attitudes on policing, the latter were more prone to moderation by gender. This trend repeats partially for social media also, with women's social media use being significantly associated with their attitudes toward policing.

Some results from our study align with previous hypotheses. For example, news networks such as MSNBC tend to feature content with a more liberal bias, appealing to a predominantly Democrat audience. Consequently, even when considering factors like political affiliation and ideological inclinations, there is a notable correlation between viewership of MSNBC and the adoption of left-leaning views on law enforcement, specifically a resistance to expanding the number of police officers. In contrast, Fox News, known for its conservative programming tailored to a more Republican-leaning audience, is associated with opinions in favor of increasing the number of police officers. This corroborates earlier research that has recognized Fox News as a significant influencer of conservative viewpoints on various policies related to race.

8.1 Future Work

Furthermore, we observed significant heterogeneity in media and social media effects among Asian Americans. This illustrates the inherent diversity in policy attitudes amongst Asian Americans, but also the factors that shape and drive them. This necessitates deeper exploration of mechanisms that drive attitudes on race-related matters among Asian Americans, for which existing surveys are not

sufficient. We plan three modifications to past survey instruments to explore these mechanisms. First, there is a need to study effects of social media use on policy attitudes in greater detail. Past survey instruments of nationally representative surveys Cooperative Election Study or the CMPS only include binary questions on social media use. Typically, this involves asking the respondent if they used social media platforms like Facebook or YouTube in a stipulated period of time. However, the content a user experiences on social media platforms is highly customized to their preferences. Therefore, we need greater specificity in our questioning on social media use. Whereas localized experiments may allow for detailed interviews about the nature of content that users are exposed to, it is difficult to peruse social media usage of respondents in nationally representative surveys with hundreds of questions. Consequently, we take a middle ground between these two approaches, and include a question on social media use in the CMPS 2024 survey that inquires about platform specific use by respondents. Responses include binary choice of whether an Asian American respondent used each of 19 different social media platforms.

Second, both Cultivation Theory and Differential Reception Theory claim that media effects are driven not just the source of news, but also by the duration of media consumption or use. The CES 2020 survey does not query respondents' quantum of social media use, and therefore, our analysis stops short of fully assessing the effect of social media on attitudes toward racial policies among Asian Americans. TO remedy this, we include one question to this end in the upcoming CMPS

Third, past literature has explored the myriad mechanisms that moderate or mediate the relationship between racial identity and attitudes toward racialized issues. Two such mechanisms are the importance of racial identity relative to the importance of national origin, and acceptance of the model minority myth. Past research [?] shows that socially constructed identities like Asian American or AAPI are much more salient among respondents that identify as liberal or as democrats. Given the salience of ideology [?] in determining attitudes on racialized issues, we must explore the role of identity-importance in greater detail. Finally, the model minority stereotype is the belief that Asian Americans have achieved a higher socio-economic status relative to other racial minorities because they emphasize education more and have a stronger work ethic. Prior works [?] have shown that such beliefs, assessed through a battery of measures [?], are a significant predictor of racial attitudes. In the CMPS 2024 instrument, we have included a question on the model minority stereotype to capture this relationship, and incorporate it in our modeling of social media effects on racial attitudes.

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A SURVEY QUESTIONS

Variable Type	Policy/Issue	Question / Statement	Responses
Dependent (CES)	Policing	Increase the number of police on the street by 10%, even if it means fewer funds for other public services	(1) - Support, (0) - Oppose
Dependent (CES)	Immigration	Increase the number of border patrols on the US-Mexican border	(1) - Support, (0) - Oppose
Independent (CES)	Media Usage	Which of these networks did you watch?	Fox News, MSNBC
Independent (CES)	Social Media Use	In the past 24 hours have you used social media (such as Facebook or Youtube)	(1) Yes, (0) No

Table 3. Survey questions from the Cooperative Election Study 2020 used in this study.